

Emerald Ash Borer meets Battle of Bad Axe July 14

A seminar with field visits will provide information on the Emerald Borer (EAB) infestation in the morning and, in the afternoon, presentations on the region before European settlement, and the Battle of Bad Axe, a conflict between settlers and Native Americans on the shores of the Mississippi River. People are welcome to participate in either or both of these learning opportunities, or any portion that strikes their interest.

The day will begin in the De Soto Community Center at 9:30 am with registration for the forestry seminar. At 10:00 a series of three speakers will fill us in on the insect that threatens our ash trees. Greg Edge, La Crosse Area Forestry Leader for the Wisconsin DNR (Department of Natural Resources), will provide the history and current status of the local EAB infestation at Victory. DNR Forest Health Specialist from Eau Claire, Todd Lanigan, will describe the biology of the insect pest, and signs and symptoms of infestation. Anna Healy, Plant Pest and Disease Specialist from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) will explain Wisconsin's regulations designed to limit and control the infestation. Emerald ash borer is an invasive wood boring beetle that is native to China and eastern Asia. The beetle was first found in 2002 in the United States in southeastern Michigan. EAB infests and kills only true ash species. The small green beetle causes the failure of the tree's vascular system, so, without nutrients or water, the tree will die. Thousands of trees have already met this fate in Michigan, Indiana, and points east, and many in Wisconsin already have the same destiny.

After the presentations, we will pause for a bring-your-own lunch, then proceed out to a nearby property where the infestation has spread. We will peel the bark on an infested tree to see the symptoms, and discuss forest management approaches to minimize the damage from EAB.

The day continues at the wayside along highway 35 just north of De Soto at about 1:30 pm, where Connie Arzigan of the Mississippi Valley Archeology Center will introduce the life of Native American in the region before the arrival of Europeans, and their conflict with Americans in 1832 that is called the Battle of Bad Axe. After this, we will return to the De Soto Community Center at 2:00 pm to view a thirty minute video about the Battle of Bad Axe.

This dual educational event is free to attend, and is co-sponsored by the Southwest Badger RC&D, Wisconsin DNR, Wisconsin DATCP, Kickapoo Woods Cooperative, Wisconsin Woodland Owner Association - Bad Axe Chapter, Mississippi Valley Archeology Center. For more information, contact Patrick Dayton, 608-637-5479; pdayton@vernoncounty.org or Lila Marmel, 608624-5269; sunmoon@mwt.net.